THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) The share of Sea food in the Country's total exports during the last three years is as under :—

(In Rs. Crores)

Year	Total Exports	Exort of Marine Products.	Share %
1991-92	44042	1376	3.12%
1992-93	53351	1767	3.31%
1993-94 . . . . . (upto Feb' 94)	62181	1866	3%

The target set for the year 1994-95 is 250000 M.Tonnes valued at Rs. 2800 crores.

(b) Schemes to promote export oriented shrimp farming and various technical assistance concerned with this shall be continued. Promotion of production through deep sea fishing, by equity participation, High Speed Diesel reimbursement scheme and mid sea bunkering are some of the measures taken to further increase the export of sea-food items in 1994-95.

Export of Cigarettes

3641. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the unit cost of conversion of tobacco into cigarette in the country is lowest in the world;

(b) whether it is also a fact that share of the country in the world cigarette market is only 1.5 per cent;

(c) if so, the reasons for this low percentage;

(d) what are the hindrances in the export of cigarettes from the country; and

(e) what steps Government propose to take to boost the export of cigarettes from the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) As gathered from Tobacco Industry sources, India is one of the lowest cost convertors of tobacco into cigarettes.

(b) No Sir. It is only 0.23% in quantity terms. (0.23%)

(c) and (d) Some of the hindrances in the export of cigarettes are :—

(1) Strong competition from multinational cigarette manufacturers.

(2) Want of aggressive brand promotion abroad by Indian manufacturers.

(e) Steps taken to boost export of cigarettes include :—

1. Undertaking trade promotion measures such as aggressive publicity in overseas markets, participation in fairs and exhibitions abroad, trade delegations to importing countries etc.

2. Promoting export oriented units for export of cigarettes.

3. Permitting foreign investment in cigarette industry mainly for export purpose.

4. Expanding the base of quality tobacco.

5. Encouraging manufacturers to establish warehouses in CIS countries for stock and sale of cigarettes.

6. Permitting cigarette manufacturers to import various items with a view to enable them to undertake product development.

Pulse Scandal

3642. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:
SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any inquiry has been made into the alleged "Rs. 100 crore pulse scandal" involving a shady export licences conspiracy between NAFED and other officials as reported in the Sunday Mail of December, 19-25, 1993; and

(b) if so, what are the results and findings of the inquiry ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) and (b) Material is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Ban on the sale of Basmati and non-Basmati rice in the domestic Tariff area

3643. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have banned the sale of both basmati and Non-basmati rice in the domestic tariff area by rice export-oriented units and those allocated in any export zone;

(b) if so, whether it has prohibited the import of basmati, paddy and brown rice by these units; and

(c) if so, to what extent it has helped to maintain the balance in the domestic and export requirements ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) to (c) Sale of rice in Domestic Tariff Area (DTA) is not allowed as there is zero percent Custom Duty on rice and the 100% EOUs which are able to procure all their capital goods on duty-free basis could be placed in a position of unfair advantage relative to other rice mills in the DTA.

Such imports are not considered in the best interest of the image of Indian basmati, nor in the interests of the basmati growers, and are, therefore, not allowed.